Railroad traffic is lively: military trains pass Kaunas every few minutes. A single passenger train circulates daily between Vilnius and Kaunas, and one train operates every other day between Kaunas and Šeštokai.

Graveled highways go unrepaired, showing ever greater deterioration. Few ships and barges are seen on the Nemunas, as most of the fleet managed to escape to Denmark in 1944.

All artisans were driven into "artels": excessive taxes did the trick.

Wages are low and working hours are long. Prices are twice as high as in Moscow: one week's wages is spent on a kilogram of butter. In 1945 butter was transported from Lithuania to Moscow in an "airlift operation," by planes. The Muscovites liked Lithuanian butter—and butter is still exported, depriving the Lithuanians of their diet. Numerous deductions are withheld from wages—up to one half, including "voluntary" subscriptions to state loans, etc.

In consequence of the meager pay, every worker attempts to steal whatever he can, and to sell the stolen products in the black market. Lately the bureaucracy —itself most guilty of embezzlement—began penalizing the workers with harsh penalties. Nevertheless, the practice of stealing is universal, and the Russian officials set the pace. Whenever the so-called "exemplary state farms" call for volunteers to assist in planting or harvesting—there are enough volunteers who anticipate a chance to "hook something."

The morale of factory workers is as low as that of the farmers. The living conditions steadily deteriorate. Discontent over "stakhanovite efficiency," long working hours, low pay, lack of clothing, etc. is widespread. In the early part of 1948 the regime abandoned its choicest proffer to workers—the bait of appointment to managing posts. Today, there is a tendency to build up cadres of skilled specialists, a privileged caste of people in uniform—even telegraph post climbers wear uniforms. . . .

Moral Situation

Symbols of Russian "culture" and ways of life universally exhibited by the "masters and victors" are—violence, profanity, drunkenness, thievery, deceit and raggedness.

Any criminal tendencies among the natives were drastically curbed by the underground authorities. Felonies were penalized by death sentences—and the sentences were carried out. But thieving is uncontrollable in the factories and in the supply services.

The Russians and their bootlickers revel in continual drunkenness. Vodka is the universal form of bribe. Unfortunately, the brutal conditions of life affected the Lithuanians to a certain degree, too. People are tempted to forget bitter reality for a half hour at least. The resistance movement continually wages a press propaganda against alcoholism ("Don't be like a Russian!"). For strictly practical considerations of maintaining a supply service for its armed units, the resistance movement repeatedly issued orders banning home distilling and any waste of the much needed grains. The Russians, however, pursue a definite policy aimed at demoralizing the natives and weakening their moral standards. Vodka is dumped on the market in unlimited unrationed qualities. But — the Church is still permitted to preach against the evils of drunkenness.